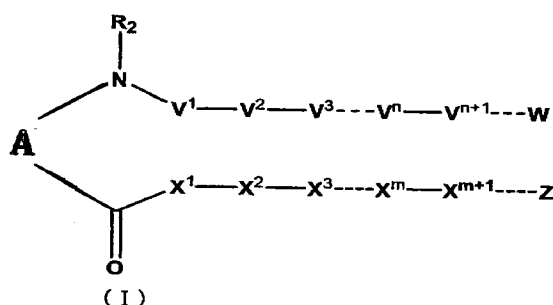


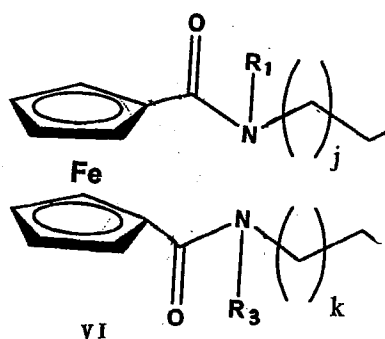
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A ferrocene compound represented by the following formula

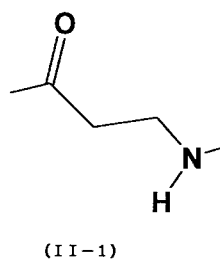
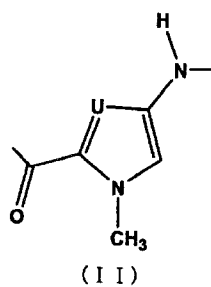
(I):



wherein A represents a divalent ferrocene-containing linker ~~or ferrocene-1,1'-yl~~, represented by the following formula (VI):

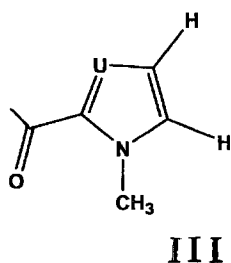


wherein R₁ and R₃ represent a hydrogen atom or alkyl; j and k represent the same or different integer of from 0 to 5, R₂ represents a hydrogen atom or alkyl; n and m represent any natural numbers; and wherein each of [[V¹]] V² to Vⁿ⁺¹ and each of [[X¹]] X² to X^{m+1} is independently represented by the following formula (II) or (II-1):

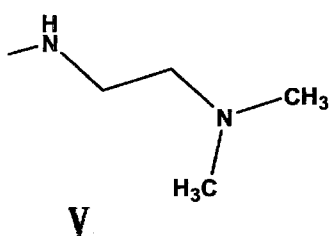
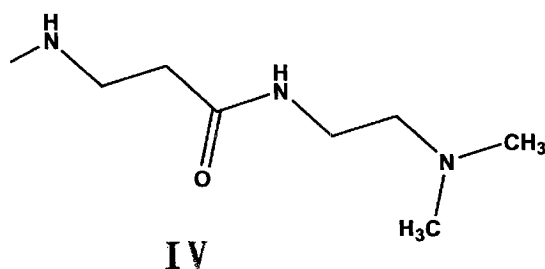


wherein each of V¹ and X¹ is represented by the formula (II),

W represents the following formula (III):



wherein U in the formulae (II) and (III) represents a nitrogen atom, methine or hydroxymethine;
and Z represents the following formulae (IV) or (V):



and both ends of each of V^n and X^m in the formula (I) form a (-CO-NH-) bond except that a bond on the side of the ferrocene-containing linker or ferrocene-1,1'-yl of V^1 is (-CO-NR₂-).

2. (Previously Presented) The ferrocene compound according to Claim 1 wherein n and m are natural numbers in the range of 3 – 20.

3. (Previously Presented) The ferrocene compound according to Claim 1 or 2 wherein the number of n is smaller by one than that of m.

4-5. (Cancelled)

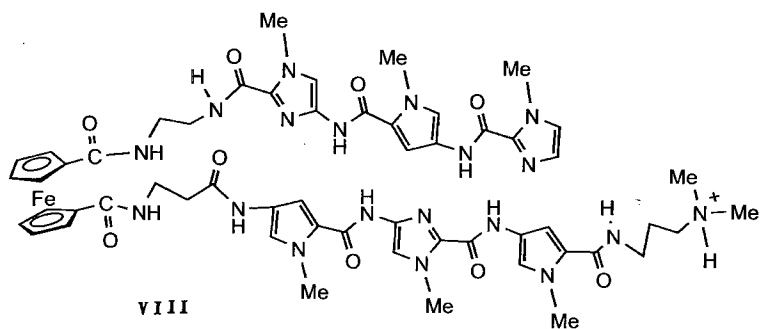
6. **(Currently Amended)** The ferrocene compound according to Claim [[4]] 1 wherein j and k are 1.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The ferrocene compound according to Claim [[4]] 1 wherein R₁ and R₃ represent a hydrogen atom.

8. **(Cancelled)**

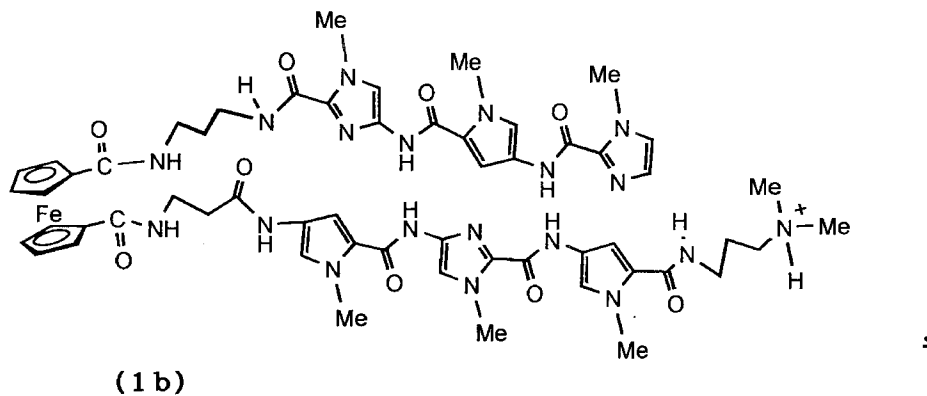
9. **(Previously Presented)** The ferrocene compound according to Claim 1 wherein R₁, R₂ and R₃ represent alkyl having one or several carbon atoms.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The ferrocene compound represented by the following formula (VIII):

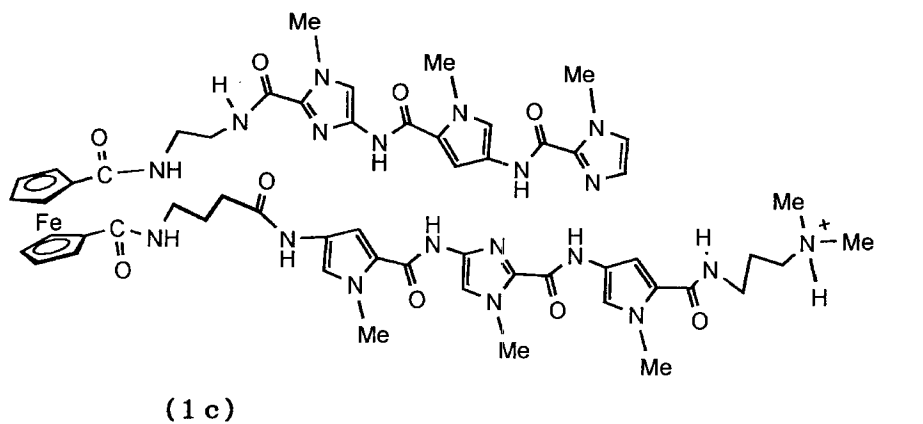


11. (Cancelled)

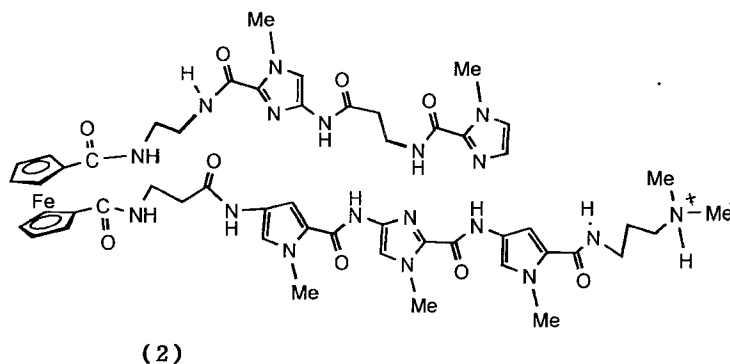
12. (Currently Amended) The ferrocene compound represented by the following formula (1b):



13. (Currently Amended) The ferrocene compound represented by the following formula (1c):



14. **(Currently Amended)** The ferrocene compound represented by the following formula (2):



15. **(Cancelled)**

16. **(Cancelled)**

17. **(Previously Presented)** A ligand consisting of the ferrocene compound according to Claim 1 for sequence-specific detection of double-stranded nucleic acid molecules.

18-25. **(Cancelled)**

26. **(New)** The ferrocene compound according to Claim 1 wherein R_1 , R_2 and R_3 represent hydrogen.